

Vessel Name	_____
Hull Number	_____
Date Landed	_____

## Northeast Fisheries Observer Program

**PRE TRIP VESSEL SAFETY CHECKLIST**

For each item please place a ✓ in the appropriate box. If the item is required for this particular trip but not on board, or service date expired, check the "No" box. **Please provide comments.**

An incomplete Pre Trip Vessel Safety Checklist may affect your bonus.

Yes	No	Not Required
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☐ ☐ ☐ Vessel walk through

While locating/checking the below items note general condition of vessel. \* See back for examples.

☐ ☐ ☐ Current USCG Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Examination Decal  
Locate Vessel Safety Examination Decal and check expiration date (good for 2 years).

**Required for all vessels**

☐ ☐ ☐ Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB)  
Locate EPIRB. Check hydrostatic release service date (good for 1 year).

**Required for all vessels operating beyond 3 miles.**

☐ ☐ ☐ Life raft(s)  
Locate life raft(s). Check hydrostatic release *and* raft service dates (good for 1 year). Is capacity correct for everyone on board including the observer?

**Within 12 miles of coast, 3 people or less *and* vessel length < 36' = no requirement. All others required to have some type of a survival craft.**

☐ ☐ ☐ Immersion suits and personal floatation devices  
Are there enough for everyone onboard? Keep yours easily accessible.

☐ ☐ ☐ Radio(s)  
Locate radio(s).

☐ ☐ ☐ Fire extinguishers  
Locate and check service date (good for 1 year).  
**Not required on vessels < 26' with outboard motor(s).**

☐ ☐ ☐ Emergency signaling flares  
Locate emergency signaling flares. Check expiration date(s).

☐ ☐ ☐ First aid material  
Locate first aid supplies/kit.

☐ ☐ ☐ Life rings  
Locate life rings.  
**Vessels > 26' = 1 life ring buoy; Vessels > 65' = 3 life ring buoys.**

☐ ☐ ☐ Are safety drills regularly conducted on this vessel?  
Drills could include fire, flooding, life raft deployment, abandon ship, etc. **Please provide comments.**

☐ ☐ ☐ Will one be conducted while you are onboard? Please ask the captain these two questions.

Observer's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Trip ID # \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments on back**

*\* The following are examples of things that you should/could check while doing a vessel walk through. They are listed here to assist you when determining the relative safety of a particular vessel. It is not a comprehensive list but one that is intended to start you thinking.*

- Does the vessel seem well maintained? Is it neat, clean and being run by a crew that is careful and prepared?
- Any visible hydraulic leaks?
- Is the vessel being used for the purpose it was originally designed? Have significant changes been made?
- Do obvious hazards exist? Note potentially hazardous areas/conditions.
- Identify the watertight doors (interior and exterior). Can they be secured in case of heavy weather or emergencies?
- Are any hatches or passageways blocked or difficult to get to?
- Does deck gear appear to be in good working order and are there safety concerns with the setup? Are there wires that run overhead? Are shackles and blocks worn excessively (especially ones that are overhead)?
- Is vessel long overdue for a haul out (excessive growth at waterline or hull paint in poor condition)?
- How often is the bilge pump going on?
- How high off of the deck is the fish hold hatch and is it in good condition? Are there any other openings on deck and are they covered with hatches?
- Would anything prevent you from abandoning ship from the living quarters?
- What are the escape routes from every part of the vessel you might find yourself? Visualize egress for all possible scenarios (fire, flooding, capsized, dark, etc.) and mentally note landmarks.
- What are the most combustible items on board and where are they stored?
- Are there any exposed exhaust pipes/manifolds that might pose burn hazards?
- While you are at sea note the roll period. Generally a boat with a quick, snappy roll is more stable than a boat that has a slow or sluggish roll period. A boat that seems to hesitate, on its side, before righting could be unstable.
- Does the vessel list excessively?
- Is there heavy equipment on deck that is not lashed down?
- Are there any exposed drive chains, pulleys or belts?
- Are there safety issues involved with boarding?
- Is there a sufficient amount of scuppers and are they large enough to be effective? Do they become plugged during fishing operations?
- Is there a station bill posted and is your role clear during all shipboard emergencies?

Are there emergency instructions, or did the captain (or a designee) give a safety orientation, explaining the following:

**Required to conduct at least 1 of the following: 1. Orientation, 2. Safety Instructions or 3. Safety Drills.**

- Survival craft embarkation stations?
- Survival craft assignments?
- Fire/emergency/abandon ship signals?
- Procedures for rough weather sea?
- Procedures for recovering person overboard?
- Procedures for fighting a fire?
- Essential actions required of each person in an emergency?

**WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU CHECKED *YOUR*  
PERSONAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT ??????**

**Comments:**